
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



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House Approves Fiscally Irresponsible Budget

On Thursday, the House passed a Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Resolution that ends tax relief for millions of American families, increases federal spending, and ignores desperately needed fiscal reforms. This resolution sets forth a budgetary blueprint that represents the largest tax increase in American history, taking almost \$683 billion from taxpayers' wallets over the next five years. By the year 2012, taxpayers in the 42nd District would see their taxes increase by an average amount of \$2,343 with an estimated cost to the local economy of \$346 million. During debate on the resolution, Congressman Miller supported an alternative budget that would have balanced the federal budget in five years without raising taxes. Unfortunately, this alternative failed and the underlying resolution passed by a vote of 212 to 207. At a time when America faces a slowing economy and soaring costs of living, Congressman Miller believes the last thing the American people need is a tax increase. He will continue to advocate for fiscally responsible spending that funds our nation's vital needs while living within a sensible framework.

Congress Continues to Debate Intelligence Reform

This week, the House met in a rare secret session to consider reforms to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), the 1978 law that governs when and how American intelligence agencies can intercept foreign communications. Last August, Congress passed temporary legislation updating this law to reflect the realities of modern technology. Specifically, this legislation closed a gap which prevented intelligence officials from intercepting communications between foreign nationals in foreign countries which happen to be routed through telecommunications switches located in the United States. The authority to continue intercepting these types of communications, however, expired on February 16 of this year. In response, the House this week approved legislation that closes this intelligence gap, but stops short of protecting telecommunications companies that have cooperated with the government from lawsuits. As the House and the Senate work to reconcile their competing proposals, Congressman Miller will continue to support efforts to intercept terrorist communications while respecting the civil liberties of American citizens.

Congressman Miller Signs Petition to Bring SAVE Act to the House Floor

Congressman Miller this week joined 179 of his colleagues in signing a discharge petition that would bring a tough, enforcement-first immigration proposal known as the SAVE Act to the House floor. Once signed by 218 Members of Congress, this parliamentary petition would force congressional leaders to hold an immediate up-or-down vote on the bill.

The SAVE Act, which Congressman Miller was proud to cosponsor, would increase the size of the Border Patrol, employ more interior enforcement officers, and expand detention capacity. Crucially, the bill also cracks down on the hiring of illegal aliens by making participation in an electronic verification program mandatory. In the weeks ahead, he will continue pushing to bring this important measure to the House floor in order to close our porous borders and remove the incentives for illegal aliens to remain in the United States in violation of our laws.

Applications Sought for U.S. Military Service Academies, Class of 2013

Congressman Miller is now seeking applications from qualified high school juniors who wish to attend a service academy beginning the summer of 2009. Each year, he has the opportunity to nominate a select group of high school seniors to attend one of five U.S. military service academies: the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, or the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Securing a nomination is a highly competitive process and those selected have the opportunity to attend a top rated college free of charge in exchange for military service following graduation. Upon graduation from the academy, all students are commissioned as officers in their respective branches of the service. To learn more about our nation's service academies and the admissions process, please contact Congressman Miller's service academy coordinator at (714) 257-1142.